

Conflict Management Style Survey

Adapted from *How to Manage Conflict*

-Peg Pickering

Rank items A through E for each item. Place the number 5 next to the best response for you, then 4 for the next best, then 3, then 2, then 1 for the least accurate one. Try not to agonize over these. There are not right or wrong answers, only truthful ones. Generally, your initial gut response is the most accurate one. Make your choices quickly. You must rank all 5 choices for each question – even those with which you struggle.

1. When you have strong feelings in a conflict situation, you would:

- ☐ A. Enjoy the emotional release and sense of exhilaration and accomplishment.
- ☐ B. Enjoy the challenge of the conflict.
- ☐ C. Become serious and concerned about how others are feeling and thinking
- ☐ D. Find it frightening because someone will get hurt
- ☐ E. Become convinced there is nothing you can do to resolve the issue

2. What's the best result you can expect from a conflict?

- ☐ A. Conflict helps people face facts
- ☐ B. Conflict cancels out extremes in thinking so a strong middle ground can be reached.
- ☐ C. Conflict clears the air, enhances commitment and results
- ☐ D. Conflict demonstrates the absurdity of self-centeredness and draws people closer together.
- ☐ E. Conflict lessens complacency and assigns blame where it belongs.

3. When you have authority in a conflict situation, you would:

- ☐ A. Put it straight and let others know your view
- ☐ B. Try to negotiate the best settlement
- ☐ C. Ask for other viewpoints and suggest that a position be found that both sides might try.
- ☐ D. Go along with others, providing support where you can
- ☐ E. Keep the encounter impersonal, citing rules if they apply

4. When someone takes an unreasonable position, you would:

- ☐ A. Lay it on the line and say that you don't like it
- ☐ B. Let him or her know in casual, subtle ways that you are not pleased; possibly distract with humor; and avoid direct confrontation.
- ☐ C. Call attention to the conflict and explore mutually acceptable solutions
- ☐ D. Keep your misgivings to yourself
- ☐ E. Let your actions speak for you, possibly using depression or lack of interest

5. When you become angry with a peer, you:

- ☐ A. Explode without giving it much thought
- ☐ B. Smooth things over with a good story
- ☐ C. Express your anger and invite a response
- ☐ D. Compensate for your anger by acting the opposite of your feelings
- ☐ E. Remove yourself from the situation

6. When you find yourself disagreeing with other members about a project, you:

- ☐ A. Stand by your convictions and defend them
- ☐ B. Appeal to the logic of the group in the hope of convincing at least a majority that you are right
- ☐ C. Explore points of agreement and disagreement
- ☐ D. Go along with the group
- ☐ E. Do not participate in the discussion and don't feel bound by any decision made.

7. When one group member takes a position in opposition to the rest of the group, you:

- ☐ A. Point out publicly that the dissenting member is blocking the group and suggest that the group move on without him or her if necessary
- ☐ B. Make sure the dissenting member has a chance to communicate his/her objections so that a compromise can be reached.
- ☐ C. Try to uncover why the dissenting member views that issue differently so that the group's members can re-evaluate their own positions
- ☐ D. Encourage members to set the conflict aside and go on to more agreeable items on the agenda
- ☐ E. Remain silent because it is best to avoid becoming involved.

8. When you see conflict emerging in your team, you would:

- ☐ A. Push for a quick decision to ensure that the task is completed
- ☐ B. Avoid outright confrontation by moving the discussion toward a middle ground
- ☐ C. Share with the group your impression of what is going on so that the nature of the impending conflict can be discussed.
- ☐ D. Relieve the tension with humor
- ☐ E. Stay out of the conflict as long as it is of no concern to you

9. In handling conflict between group members, you would:

- ☐ A. Anticipate areas of resistance and prepare responses to objections prior to open conflict
- ☐ B. Encourage your members to be prepared by identifying in advance areas of possible compromise
- ☐ C. Recognize that conflict is healthy and press for the identification of shared concerns and/or goals
- ☐ D. Promote harmony on the grounds that the only real result of conflict is the destruction of friendly relations
- ☐ E. Submit the issue to an impartial arbitrator

10. In your view, what might be the reason for the failure of one group

to work with another?

- _____ A. Lack of a clearly stated position or failure to back up the group's position
_____ B. Tendency of groups to force their leaders to abide by the group's decision as opposed to promoting flexibility, which would facilitate compromise
_____ C. Tendency of groups to enter negotiations with a win/lose perspective
_____ D. Lack of motivation on the part of the group's leaders, resulting in the leaders placing emphasis on maintaining their own power positions rather than addressing the issues involved
_____ E. Irresponsible behavior on the part of the group's leaders, resulting in the leaders placing emphasis on maintaining their own power position rather than addressing the issues involved.

Scoring:

Go back and total the numbers you have placed for each letter and record the totals below. (Record all the numbers for A and record, and so on.) For example, if you have placed the number 5 next to A for all ten questions, your score for A would be 50.

A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

D. _____ E. _____

Look at your totals.

- ✓ The highest number typically represents the conflict management style you perceive yourself to use most- most people see themselves as collaborators
- ✓ Look at the second highest number. It typically move accurately represents your strongest conflict management style
- ✓ The lowest number represents the style in which your skills are typically the weakest

Column A: Dominating style
Column B: Compromising style
Column C: Collaborative style
Column D: Obliging style
Column E: Avoiding style

What is your style? _____

What is your weakest style? _____